

SERIAL STORY

LOVE ON THE LINE

BY PAUL FRIGGENS

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YESTERDAY: Ashton Oaks follows Carrie to her claim, tries to interest her in buying town lots. When she refuses, he drives away, angrily, promising that neither she nor Deuel has heard the last of it. Late that night, Newt Gate sees a figure crouched in the darkness near the land office, recognizes Oaks.

CHAPTER VI

MARK went to bed but he couldn't sleep after leaving Carrie Lane. There in the shadows, she had stood close to him, called him Mark. "Mark, I am afraid, terribly afraid," she had said. And he had wanted to take her in his arms, protect her.

Now, he could imagine her near him again and saying, "Mark, Mark," over and over. He could imagine he was kissing her and telling her not to worry, that everything would work out all right, that he would see life would always be all right for Carrie Lane.

All through the next day, Mark pictured Carrie Lane, heard her calling his name, until it seemed he could not wait another hour to see her. Even Ma Parmley noticed his preoccupation at the supper table and promptly laid it to Carrie Lane, loudly—all of which didn't help Mark's embarrassment before the other homesteaders.

Saturday, Mark saw her, late in the afternoon as he was passing the hotel. His nerves tingled. She had come to town to stay with the Taylors. Her saddy would be completed Monday and she would move in.

"Might be a long time again before you'll see me," she told Mark jokingly, as he stopped, apparently casually, to talk with her and the Taylors.

"Doesn't that call for some sort of celebration, then?" Mark asked, instantly seizing his opportunity. "There's a dance here tonight over the store. I'd like very much to take you—that is, if it's all right with the Taylors."

Mark marveled afterward that he was able to say all this so quickly when his heart seemed to pound till it hurt. He had wanted to call her "Carrie," too, but somehow he couldn't quite bring himself to it.

"All right with us," Mrs. Taylor raised her brows. "Wouldn't be all right with us if you didn't." She winked at Ed, who promptly reminded his wife the Taylors were going to the dance, too, if Mrs. Taylor could "scare up a clean shirt" somewhere for him.

CARRIE and the Taylors were ready and waiting at Sioux Springs House when Mark came for them. Carrie wore the same white dress she had on that first day Mark saw her. Looking at her, Mark was speechless for a minute. "You sure look nice," he told her, awkwardly.

The Taylors had put on their Sunday clothes and they looked little like the homesteaders who had come to town earlier that day. Mark's vest, white bolted shirt and gray suit had wrought as great a change.

Carrie was happier than he had ever seen her as they walked down Main Street to the dance hall over Bill Williams' general store. Together they made a striking picture—Mark, tall, imposing, handsome; Carrie on his arm, gay, laughing, bonneted head held high. Intuitively, denim-clad homesteaders and booted freighters reached respectfully for their hats as the couple passed, gathered in curious little knots in their wake.

The party was well under way when Mark led the way up an outside stairs to the low-ceilinged dance hall. A solitary fiddle whined above the din of dancing and conversation. Mark recognized the "Arkansas Traveler."

The small room was hot, crowded. Lanky, awkward young "soddies" lined the dance floor, packed to overflowing. Carrie saw quickly the men outnumbered the women three to one, felt every eye upon her.

They swung out into the jostling, milling crowd, Carrie in Mark's arms for the first time. It was unbelievably thrilling.

"Mark," Carrie smiled up into his face, "I hope we get along better than some of the couples I see here tonight." She tossed her head, indicating a bewhiskered freighter who was stomping about the floor pumping his partner's arm for dear life. And there were more like him. They laughed together. The noise grew louder and louder, they moved faster and faster, bumping, shoving, twisting, dodging. Never had Carrie attended a dance like this and yet, never had she been happier.

They came back to the Taylors breathless, Carrie flushed, wilted; Mark perspiring, more handsome, Carrie thought, than ever.

"Well," boomed Ed Taylor, "guess it's safe for us to tackle now that you and Mark got out alive," and added, "but don't think, Mark Deuel, you're gonna have all them dances to yourself." He winked broadly as the solitary fiddler, mounted on a box at the end of the room, struck up again with "Devil's Dream" and the din was resumed.

THEY danced till midnight. Mark and Carrie, danced waltzes and two-steps, and the schottische and the square dance, whirling until it seemed they might drop, and loving every precious minute of it. Mark holding Carrie in his arms, drew her closer on the last waltz, till he felt the sweetness of her golden hair against his cheek, her face close to his. Somehow, Mark

knew intuitively Carrie Lane was as tense, breathless as he.

And then it happened. It was a tag waltz. Mark felt a heavy slap on his shoulder and turned to face Ashton Oaks. Instantly, Mark saw the man was drunk, reeling. He tried to ignore the agent, but it was too late. Carrie saw him, too, went white.

"Sorry, my dance," Oaks said through thick lips, and moved between Carrie and Mark.

"Sorry, but it isn't," said Mark quietly, trying to move out onto the floor again. Oaks shoved Mark aside roughly, taking Carrie in his arms. Instantly, the other dancers, sensing trouble, drew back, left the three conspicuously in the center of the floor.

The music screeched on, but the room grew quiet, tense.

"Oaks," Mark wheeled on him, "if you are a gentleman, you will please let my partner alone."

Mark moved to lead Carrie from the floor.

It was the least he might have said, but it was too much. Grasping Carrie tighter, Oaks stood there for a second, staggering, sneering. Then he said it, so loud he could be heard across the room—"Your partner? You might be interested to know, Mr. Deuel, I spent the afternoon with her out at Rock Creek."

Mark never recalled exactly what happened after that. He lunged in blind fury at Ashton Oaks, fists swinging, seizing him by the throat, while Carrie, screaming, ran back to the Taylors. The crowd closed in and it was over as quickly as it began. Panting,

his collar torn open, Oaks was hurried from the dance hall by brawny homesteaders. The fiddler struck up "Devil's Dream," someone yelled, "Supper—come and get it 'fore we throw it out!" Carrie and Mark were caught in the rush with the Taylors and 200 others.

It was an unforgettable experience and Carrie, still shaking, clinging to Mark's arm as they passed along the long table, felt they had not seen the end of it. (To Be Continued)

Lucky Tiger



Monnie Drake, 20-year-old Detroit radio and night club singer whose name has been romantically linked with Barney McCosky, Tiger outfielder, was named Miss Michigan and will represent the state in national beauty contest in Atlantic City.

THIS CURIOUS WORLD

By William Ferguson



THE SPINNING EARTH IS OUR MOST ACCURATE TIME CLOCK! IT LOSES ONLY ABOUT ONE SECOND IN A CENTURY.

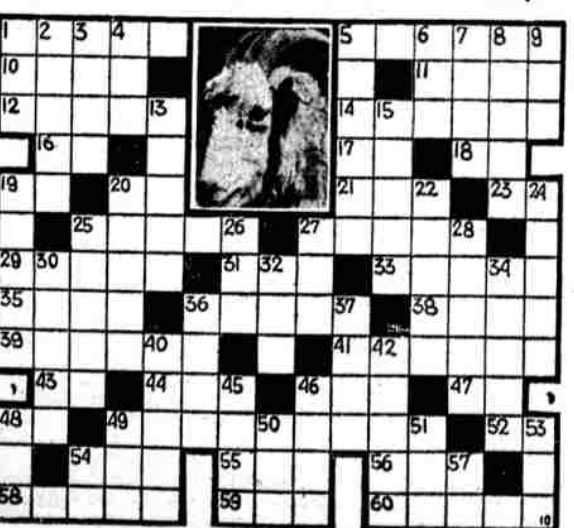
ANCIENT BIRDS HAD LONG, BONY LIZARD-LIKE TAILS, FROM WHICH THE INDIVIDUAL FEATHERS BRANCHED.



ANSWER: Players of high ranking, whose names are so arranged in the draw that they will not meet each other in early rounds.

GROWN-UP KID

- HORIZONTAL**
- 1 Pictured ruminant mammal (pl.)
 - 5 It has horns.
 - 10 Hideous monster.
 - 11 Irish tribal title.
 - 12 To wink.
 - 14 Substitute ruler for a king.
 - 16 Each (abbr.).
 - 17 Paid publicity.
 - 18 North Africa.
 - 19 Railroad (abbr.).
 - 20 1416.
 - 21 To be seated.
 - 22 Street (abbr.).
 - 23 Engrave.
 - 24 Cravat.
 - 25 Ships' companies.
 - 31 Venomous snake.
 - 32 Ringlet.
 - 33 Air toy.
 - 34 Hardened iron.
- Answer to Previous Puzzle**
- VERTICAL**
- 1 James.
 - 2 Al.
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OUT OUR WAY

By J. R. WILLIAMS



RED RYDER



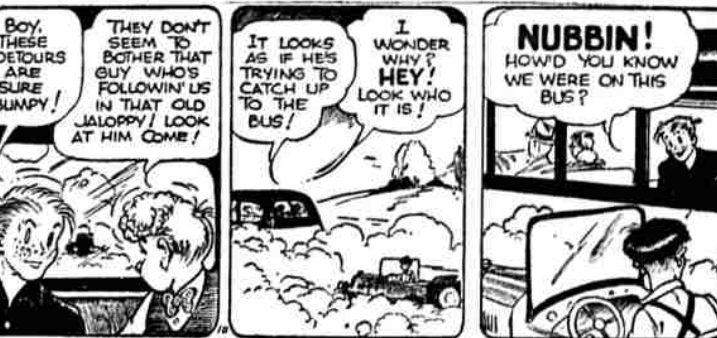
LITTLE ORPHAN ANNIE



WASH TUBBS



FRECKLES AND HIS FRIENDS



BOOTS AND HER BUDDIES



ALLEY OOP



OUR BOARDING HOUSE

With MAJOR HOOPLE



BY FRED HARMAN



BY HAROLD GRAY



BY CRANE



BY BLOSSER



BY MARTIN



BY V. T. HAMLIN

